IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for operating a computer to conduct a due diligence for a business transaction, the computer coupled to a database, said method comprising:

storing transactional data in the database for a plurality of different types of business transactions including a commercial financing, a merger, an acquisition, and a real estate transaction, the transactional data including a first set of data and a second set of data, wherein the first data set identifies data required to complete [[a]] each of the plurality of different types of business transactions, and the second data set identifies a person or a tool recommended for collecting the data required to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions;

inputting into the computer a ~~specific type of~~ business transaction to be completed, wherein the inputted business transaction is included within one of the plurality of different types of business transactions stored in the database;

automatically identifying data to be collected during the due diligence to generate each standard documentation file to complete the inputted business transaction, each standard documentation file includes a plurality of documents associated with at least one part of the business transaction, wherein said automatically identifying data is based on the first data set stored in the database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;

automatically identifying at least one data collector to collect the identified data, ~~wherein the identified data to be collected and the at least one identified data collector are identified based on the type of business transaction inputted into the computer and the transactional data stored in the database~~ wherein said automatically identifying the at least one data collector is based on the second data set stored in the database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;

receiving the identified data from the at least one identified data collector;

storing the collected data in the database; and

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generating each standard documentation file as part of the due diligence to complete the inputted business transaction including automatically assembling each document included within each standard documentation file using the collected data stored in the database.

2. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of automatically identifying data to be collected further comprises the step of identifying a time for collection of the identified data, wherein the identified time sequentially relates a first event to a second event.

3. (cancelled)

4. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of receiving the identified data further comprises the step of evaluating the effectiveness of collection of the identified data.

5. (original) A method according to Claim 4 wherein said step of evaluating the effectiveness of collection comprises the step of determining a percentage of completion of the standard documentation file.

6. (original) A method according to Claim 5 wherein the percentage of completion is determined according to (number of items collected/number of total item collected)*100.

7. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of receiving the identified data comprises receiving the identified data from data collected during at least one phase of the due diligence, wherein the phases of the due diligence include customer origination, auditing and underwriting and approval.

8. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of generating each standard documentation file further comprises assembling at least one standard documentation file including generating at least one of a pre-closing credit file and a legal documentation file.

9. (original) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of transferring at least one standard documentation file to external deal teams.

10. (original) A method according to Claim 4 wherein said step of evaluating the effectiveness of collection of the identified data comprises the step of determining at least one of a percent of data passed between underwriting and legal, a percent of usable data provided by underwriting and approval and a present percent of completeness of the standard documentation file after each stage of due diligence.

11. (original) A method according to Claim 10 wherein the percent of data passed between underwriting and approval and legal is calculated according to (actual number of items in the standard documentation file divided by an expected number of items in the standard documentation file) * 100.

12. (original) A method according to Claim 10 wherein the percent of usable data provided by underwriting and approval is calculated according to (an actual number of accurate documentation items divided by an expected number of documentation items) * 100.

13. (cancelled)

14. (currently amended) A computer for conducting a due diligence for a business transaction, said computer coupled to a database, said computer programmed to:

store transactional data in the database for a plurality of different types of business transactions including a commercial financing, a merger, an acquisition, and a real estate transaction, the transactional data including a first set of data and a second set of data, wherein the first data set identifies data required to complete [[a]] each of the plurality of different types of business transactions, and the second data set identifies a person or a tool recommended for collecting each data type required to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions;

prompt a user to input a specific type of business transaction to be completed, wherein the inputted business transaction is included within one of the plurality of different types of business transactions stored in the database;

automatically identify data to be collected during the due diligence to generate each standard documentation file to complete the inputted business transaction, each standard documentation file includes a plurality of documents associated with at least one part of the

business transaction, wherein said automatically identifying data is based on the first data set stored in the database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;

automatically identify at least one data collector to collect the identified data, ~~wherein the identified data to be collected and the at least one identified data collector are identified based on the type of business transaction inputted into the computer and the transactional data stored in the database~~ wherein said automatically identifying the at least one data collector is based on the second data set stored in the database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;

receive the identified data from the at least one identified data collector;

store the collected data in the database; and

generate each standard documentation file as part of the due diligence to complete the inputted business transaction including automatically assembling each document included within each standard documentation file using the collected data stored in the database.

15. (previously presented) A computer according to Claim 14 wherein said computer is further programmed to prompt the user to identify a time for collection of the identified data.

16. (cancelled)

17. (original) A computer according to Claim 14 configured to evaluate the effectiveness of collection of the identified data by determining a percentage of completion of the standard documentation file.

18. (original) A computer according to Claim 17 wherein the percentage of completion is determined according to (number of items collected/number of total item collected)*100.

19. (original) A computer according to Claim 14 wherein for a standard documentation file said computer configured to generate at least one of a pre-closing credit file and a legal documentation file.

20. (original) A computer according to Claim 17 wherein to evaluate the effectiveness of collection of the identified data, said computer is configured to determine at least one of a percent of data passed between underwriting and legal, a percent of usable data provided by underwriting and approval and a present percent of completeness of the standard documentation file after each stage of due diligence.

21. (original) A computer according to Claim 20 wherein said computer is configured to calculate the percent of data passed between underwriting and approval and legal according to (actual number of items in the standard documentation file divided by an expected number of items in the standard documentation file) * 100.

22. (original) A computer according to Claim 20 wherein said computer is configured to calculate the percent of usable data provided by underwriting and approval according to (an actual number of accurate documentation items divided by an expected number of documentation items) * 100.

23. (currently amended) A database for conducting a due diligence for a business transaction, said database comprising:

data corresponding to transactional data for a plurality of different types of business transactions including a commercial financing, a merger, an acquisition, and a real estate transaction, wherein the transactional data includes a first set of data and a second set of data, wherein the first data set identifies data required to complete [[a]] each of the plurality of different types of business transactions, and the second data set identifies a person or a tool recommended for collecting each data type required to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions;

data corresponding to prompting a user to input a specific type of business transaction to be completed, wherein the inputted business transaction is included within one of the plurality of different types of business transactions stored in the database;

data corresponding to identifying data to be collected during the due diligence to generate each standard documentation file to complete the inputted business transaction, each standard documentation file includes a plurality of documents associated with at least one

part of the business transaction, wherein said identifying data is based on the first data set for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;

data corresponding to identifying at least one data collector to collect the identified data, ~~wherein the identified data to be collected and the at least one identified data collector are identified based on the type of business transaction inputted and the transactional data~~ wherein said identifying data is based on the second data set for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;

data corresponding to a time for collection of the identified data; and

data corresponding to generating each standard documentation file for the due diligence to complete the inputted business transaction including automatically assembling each document included within each standard documentation file using the collected data.

24. (original) A database according to Claim 23 further comprising data corresponding to an evaluation of the effectiveness of collected data.

25. (original) A database according to Claim 23 wherein said data corresponding to the standard documentation file comprises data documenting a transaction.

26. (original) A database according to Claim 23 wherein said data corresponding to the standard documentation file comprises data provided by external deal teams and internal deal teams.

27. (original) A database according to Claim 23 further comprising data corresponding to a percent completion of the standard documentation file.

28. (original) A database according to Claim 23 wherein said data corresponding to the standard documentation file comprises at least one of data associating a pre-closing file with an audit report, data regarding accounts receivable aging and data relating to a top ten customers by sales volume.

29. (original) A database according to Claim 23 further comprising data corresponding to a due diligence checklist.

30. (currently amended) A system for conducting a due diligence for a business transaction, said system comprising:

a database for storing transactional data for a plurality of different types of business transactions including a commercial financing, a merger, an acquisition, and a real estate transaction, the transactional data including a first set of data and a second set of data, wherein the first data set identifies data required to complete [[a]] each of the plurality of different types of business transactions and including a due diligence checklist, and the second data set identifies a person or a tool recommended for collecting the data required to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions;

a server coupled to the database, the server configured to:

prompt a user to input a specific type of business transaction to be completed, wherein the inputted business transaction is included within one of the plurality of different types of business transactions stored in the database;

automatically identify data to be collected during the due diligence to generate each standard documentation file to complete the inputted business transaction, each standard documentation file includes a plurality of documents associated with at least one part of the business transaction, wherein said automatically identifying data is based on the first data set stored in said database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;

automatically identify at least one data collector to collect the identified data, wherein said automatically identifying the at least one data collector is based on the second data set stored in said database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;

automatically identify a time for collection of the identified data, wherein the identified data to be collected, the at least one identified data collector and the time for collection are identified based on the type of business transaction inputted into the computer and the transactional data stored in the database, wherein said automatically identifying the time is based on the transactional data stored in said

database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction; and

generate each standard documentation file as part of the due diligence to complete the inputted business transaction including automatically assembling each document included within each standard documentation file using the collected data.

31. (original) A system according to Claim 30 wherein said server configured to receive and store the identified data, evaluate the effectiveness of collection of the identified data and assemble the data into a standard documentation file stored in said database.

32. (original) A system according to Claim 31 wherein said server is configured to evaluate the effectiveness of collection of the identified data by determining one of present percent of completeness of the standard documentation file, percent of data passed between underwriting and approval and legal and the percent of usable data provided by underwriting and approval.

33. (original) A system according to Claim 32 wherein said server is further configured to determine a percent of completeness of the standard documentation file according to (number of items collected/number of total item collected)*100.

34. (original) A system according to Claim 32 wherein said server is further configured to determine a percent of data passed between underwriting and approval and legal according to (actual number of items in the standard documentation file divided by an expected number of items in the standard documentation file) * 100.

35. (original) A system according to Claim 32 wherein said server is further configured to determine a percent of usable data provided by underwriting and approval according to (an actual number of accurate documentation items divided by an expected number of documentation items) * 100.

36. (original) A system according to Claim 30 wherein said server is configured for assembling at least one standard documentation file using one of a document generating system or software and a data management software or system.

37. (original) A system according to Claim 30 wherein said server is configured for assembling one of a pre-closing credit file and a legal documentation file.

38. (original) A system according to Claim 30 wherein said server is configured to receive data via at least one of the Internet and an Intranet.

39. (original) A system according to Claim 30 wherein said server is configured to receive and store the data from data collected during one of customer origination, auditing and underwriting and approval.

40. (original) A system according to Claim 30 wherein said database comprises at least one of data corresponding to at least one identified collector, data corresponding to a time for collection of identified data for a standard documentation file, and data corresponding to the standard documentation file.

41. (original) A system according to Claim 40 wherein said database comprises data corresponding to an evaluation of effectiveness of collected data.

42. (original) A system according to Claim 40 wherein said database comprises data corresponding to a percent completion of the standard documentation file.

43. (original) A system according to Claim 40 wherein said data corresponding to the standard documentation file comprises data associating a pre-closing file with an audit report, data regarding accounts receivable aging and data relating to a top ten customers by sales volume.

44. (currently amended) A method for conducting a due diligence for a business transaction using a computer coupled to a database, said method comprising the steps of:

storing transactional data in the database for a plurality of different types of business transactions including a commercial financing, a merger, an acquisition, and a real estate transaction, the transactional data including a first set of data and a second set of data, wherein the first data set identifies data required to complete [[a]] each of the plurality of different types of business transactions, and the second data set identifies a person or a tool recommended for collecting each data type required to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions;

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prompting a user to input into the computer a ~~specific type of~~ business transaction to be completed, wherein the inputted business transaction is <u>included within</u> one of the plurality of different types of business transactions stored in the database;

selecting, from an electronic interface, data to be collected during the due diligence to generate each standard documentation file to complete the inputted business transaction, each standard documentation file includes a plurality of documents associated with at least one part of the business transaction<u>, wherein said selecting the data is based on the first data set stored in the database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction</u>;

selecting, from the electronic interface, at least one data collector to collect the selected data, ~~wherein the data to be collected and the at least one selected data collector are selected based on the type of business transaction inputted into the computer and the transactional data stored in the database~~ <u>wherein said selecting the at least one data collector is based on the second data set stored in the database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction</u>; <u>and</u>

generating each standard documentation file as part of the due diligence to complete the inputted business transaction including automatically assembling each document included within each standard documentation file using the collected data.

45. (original) A method according to Claim 44 further comprising the step of selecting, from the electronic interface, a time for collection of identified data.

46. (original) A method according to Claim 44 further comprising the step of requesting, from the electronic interface, an evaluation of effectiveness of the collection of the identified data.

47. (original) A method according to Claim 46 wherein an evaluation of effectiveness comprises determining a percentage of completion of the standard documentation file.

48. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 44 wherein said step of generating each standard documentation file comprises the step of requesting, from the electronic interface, at least one of a pre-closing credit file and a legal documentation file.

49. (cancelled)

50. (currently amended) Apparatus for conducting a due diligence for a business transaction, said apparatus comprising:

means for storing transactional data <u>for a plurality of different types of business transactions including a commercial financing, a merger, an acquisition, and a real estate transaction,</u> wherein the transactional data includes <u>a first set of data and a second set of data, wherein the first data set identifies</u> data required to complete [[a]] <u>each of the</u> plurality of different types of business transactions<u>, and the second data set identifies a person or a tool recommended for collecting each data type required to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions;</u>

means for inputting a ~~specific type of~~ business transaction to be completed, wherein the inputted business transaction is <u>included within</u> one of the plurality of different types of business transactions stored in the database;

means for identifying data to be collected during the due diligence to generate each standard documentation file to complete the inputted business transaction, each standard documentation file includes a plurality of documents associated with at least one part of the business transaction<u>, wherein said identifying the data is based on the first data set stored in the database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;</u>

means for identifying at least one data collector to collect the identified data, ~~wherein the identified data to be collected and the at least one identified data collector are identified based on the type of business transaction inputted and the transactional data~~ <u>wherein said identifying the at least one data collector is based on the second data set stored in the database for the type of business transaction corresponding with the inputted business transaction;</u>

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means for receiving and storing the identified data; and

means for generating each standard documentation file as part of the due diligence to complete the inputted business transaction including automatically assembling each document included within each standard documentation file using the collected data.

51. (previously presented) Apparatus according to Claim 50 wherein said means for identifying data further comprises means for prompting a user to identify a time for collection of the identified data.

52. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 50 wherein said means for receiving and storing the identified data further comprises means for storing the data in a database.

53. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 50 wherein said means for receiving and storing the identified data further comprises means for evaluating the effectiveness of collection of the identified data.

54. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 53 wherein said means for evaluating the effectiveness of collection comprises means for determining a percentage of completion of the standard documentation file.

55. (previously presented) Apparatus according to Claim 50 wherein said means for generating each standard documentation file comprises means for generating at least one of a pre-closing credit file and a legal documentation file.

56.-61. (cancelled)

62. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of inputting into the computer a ~~specific type of~~ business transaction further comprises inputting into the computer a ~~specific type of~~ business transaction to be completed wherein the inputted business transaction includes at least one of purchasing or selling an operating business and providing financing for purchasing an operating business.

63. (previously presented) A computer according to Claim 14 wherein the inputted business transaction includes at least one of purchasing or selling an operating business and providing financing for purchasing an operating business.

64. (new) A method according to Claim 1 wherein said step of storing transactional data in the database further comprises storing a knowledge base in the database, wherein the knowledge base includes a first data set identifying data required to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions, a second data set identifying a person or a tool recommended for collecting the data required to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions, and a third data set corresponding to the standard documentation file such that said automatically identifying data to be collected and said automatically identifying at least one data collector to collect the identified data are based on the stored knowledge base.

65. (new) A method according to Claim 64 wherein said step of storing a knowledge base in the database further comprises storing a knowledge base in the database, wherein the knowledge base further includes a fourth data set identifying a timing for collecting the data identified to complete each of the plurality of different types of business transactions, wherein the timing includes which data points included within the data identified for collection are to be collected before other data points included within the data identified for collection.